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OF THE
Causes and Cure
OF SAD
Disconsolate Thoughts
IN
CHRISTIANS.

BY

One of their Sympathizing Fellow-Members,

W. Traughton.

LONDON,

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EPISTLE.

To a Pensive Disconsolate SOUL.

My dear Friend,

Having taken these Notes
on a subject of great con-
cern (which may be much
more inlarged) I did consider
with my self that they might be
very seasonable and suitable to
your case and condition; for you
have been an afflicted soul for
a long time, often complaining
to God and Man of the darkness
of your spirit, and the sad and
dismal thoughts wherewith you

A. 3 have

The Epistle

have been haunted and exceedingly disquieted, as if no Mans condition were so sad and dark and disconsolate as yours : But yet there is no Temptation (as you may assure your self) which hath seized on you, but other Christians have had experience thereof ; and God, who is Faithful, will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13.

Blessed be God, you have a tender and gracious High Priest that undertakes for you ; in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them

The Epistle.

them that are tempted, Heb. 2.18. We have not (saith the Apostle) a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmitie, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without Sin ; let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need, Heb. 4. 15,16. He it is that gathers the weak Lambs with his Arm, and carries them in his Bosom, and gently leads those that are with Young, Isa. 40. 11. He will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking Flax, but will send

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The Epistle
forth Judgment unto Victory,
Math. 12. 20.

This Merciful and Compassionate Jesus never rejected any that came to him ; and will be cast you off if you come to Him with the burthen of your Sins, Sorrows, Temptations, Melancholick distempers ? No, he will not ; he hath promised he will not, Joh. 6. 37. There's an Emphasis in the Original, two Negatives, He will not in any wise, by any means cast ye out : The doubled Negatives serve to make the Assertion so much the stronger, and to raise our Faith above all doubts and fears.

The Epistle.

*O then poor Soul, be not dis-
couraged, draw not back from the
living God, through an evil heart
of unbelief: Give not way to
groundless Jealousies and carnal
Reasonings; but believe, and
you shall see the Glory of God in
giving you speedily a gracious
Issue out of all your Temptations,
and a comfortable deliverance
from the sad disconsolate per-
plexing thoughts of your own
heart, which indeed is your great-
est Enemy; for the heart is de-
ceitful above all things, and des-
perately wicked, who can know
it? Jer. 17. 9.*

*Read over these Notes seri-
ously*

The Epistle

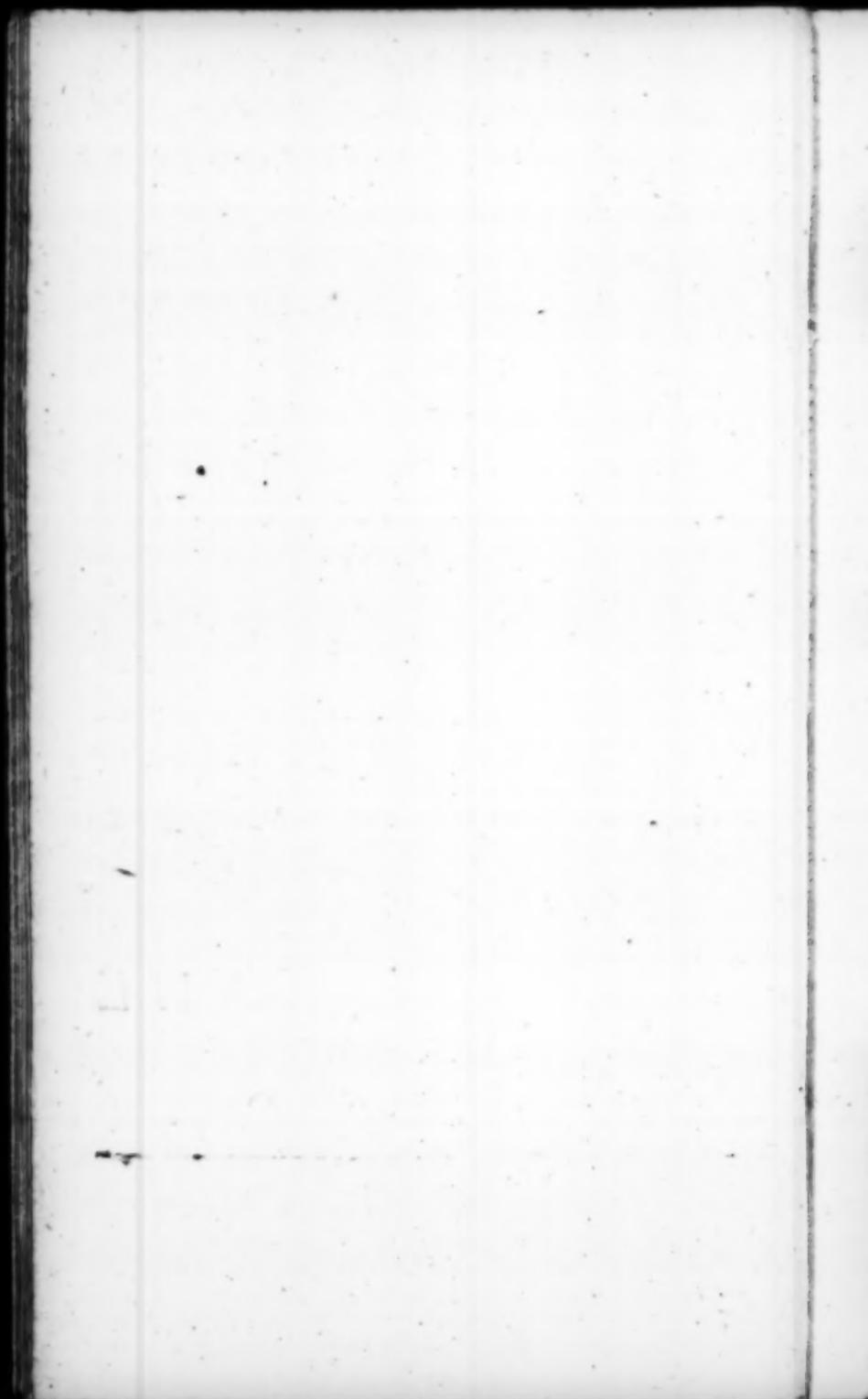
ously, and beg of God earnestly to give you Grace to improve the seasonable directions therein mentioned, and to teach you effectually by his Spirit; for who Teacheth like him? Job 36.22. When he giveth Quietness, who then can cause Trouble? And when he hideth his Face, who then can behold Him? Whether it be done against a Nation, or against a Man only, Job 34.29.

If ye think the publishing of these Notes may tend to the Edification and comfort of some other tempted afflicted souls, who are in the like condition with your self, it is left to your Freedom to get

The Epistle.

get them published, otherwise you
may make a private use of them
for your self and near Relations,
as God shall direct and enable
you; to whose Gracious Protecti-
on I commend you and yours.

THE





THE
CAUSES & CURE
 OF SAD
 Disconsolate Thoughts, &c.

Text: *Psal. 94. 19.*

*In the Multitude of my Thoughts
 within me, thy Comforts delight
 my Soul.*



Some *Interpreters* under-
 stand this Text of that
 Heavenly Delight,
 which *David* found in
 Holy *Meditation* ; a
 Work wherein he was much exer-
 cised, and whereof *Spiritual Joy* and

Delight is a Natural and Moral Effect.

But, if we look more narrowly into the *Context*, we shall see that the Prophet speaks not of *Holy Thoughts* and *Meditation*; but of *Sad* disquieting and perplexing *Thoughts*, which did arise in his Heart; against which, he found the *Consolations* of God to be the most effectual *Remedy*.

Observ. That *Saints* should watch against *sad*, *melancholly* *unbelieving* *disconsolate* *Thoughts* and *Cogitations*.

Hence it is, (even from their *Unbelief*)—that they are so apt to make *sad* and *dismal* *Conclusions* touching their *Spiritual Estate*: My *Soul* refused to be *Comforted* (*faith David, Psal. 77. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9.*) I remembred *God*, and was *troubled*: I complain-ed;

ed, and my Spirit was over-whelmed: Will the Lord *cast* off for ever, &c? So *Heman*, that Godly wise Man, saith, *Psal. 88. 4, 5.* I am counted with them that go down into the *Pit*: I am as a Man that hath no *strength*, free among the *Dead*, like the *Slain* that lye in the *Grave*, whom Thou remembrest no more, &c.

I will here describe, 1. What these *sad disconsolate Thoughts* are. 2. The *Causes* of them. 3. The *Remedies* of them. 4. Give you some *Helps* and *Directions* against them.

Quæry, *What do you mean by sad disconsolate Thoughts?*

Answ. Such Thoughts I mean, as the *Saints* themselves are exercised with, in reference to their *Spiritual Condition*; oft-times they have *sad uncomfortable Reflexions*, *heavy Burthens* on their *Souls*, *great Pressures* of *Spirit*: Why hast thou

4 *The Causes and Cure*

set me as a *mark* against thee (*faith* *Job*, *cap. 7. v. 20.*) so that I am a *Burthen* to my self.

Quæ. *What are the Causes of these sad thoughts?*

Ans̄w. They are caused both by *natural distempers* of *Body*, and by *spiritual distempers*, or *Soul pressures*.

First : Partly by *bodily distempers*, especially by *Melancholly*, which is a *black*, *cloudy*, *muddy distemper* that *darkens the Intellectuals*, depraves the *Fancy*, saddens the *Spirit* of a *Christian*, and renders his *Condition* and *Life* *uncomfortable* to him; 'tis *Satan's Chariot* wherein he *Tryumphantly rides*; his *Anvil*, on which he continually *beats*; the *Element* or *Bath*, in which he *Bathes* himself. Though a *Man* have *Grace* and *Spiritual experience* and *acquaintance* with *God*, yet if he be of a *melancholly temper* and *constitution*, he cannot act *clearfully* as a

Chri-

Christian should do, but is like a *VVaggon*, or Coach, whose wheels are out of order, so that the *Passenger* cannot comfortably perform his Journey.

Secondly: There are spiritual Causes of these sad, dark, uncomfortable thoughts, and they are six.

First: Those remaining Principles of darkness, carnal *Reason*, Slavish fear and *unbelief* which are in the hearts of God's own People, who are but in *part* Regenerated here in this Life; Satan (who is a Spirit of darkness, and delights most in *spiritual* wickedness, *Eph. 6. 12.*) works upon, and *corresponds* with these remainders of unbelief and *carnal* Reason in the Saints, as being most suitable to him, who improves his long *experience*, skill, and power to draw out and heighten these *Principles* by the *Engine* of his Temptations.

Secondly:

Secondly: These sad thoughts are *Caused* by a deep sense of *sin*, and the desert of it; this worketh *terror*, *dejection*, and *despondency* of spirit, when God *represents* and sets before a Man the greatness of his sins: Thus *David* himself *sadly* complains, *Mine Iniquities are gone over mine head, as a heavy burthen they are too heavy for me*, *Psal. 38. 4.*

Thirdly: They are caused by spiritual *desertion*, or God's hiding his *Face* from the Soul: *Thou did'st bide thy Face* (saith *David*) *and I was troubled*, *Psal. 30. 7.* And *Sion* said, *The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me*, *Isa. 49. 14.* *Wherefore hidest thou thy Face* (saith *Job*) *and holdest me for thine Enemy?* *Wilt thou break a Leaf* driven to and fro, and *wilt thou pursue the dry Stubble?* *For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the Iniquities of*

of my Youth, *Job* 13. 24, 25.

Fourthly: From the apprehension of Divine *wrath* and displeasure: Though God be *Reconciled* to Believers in Christ, yet they often apprehend God's *Frowns* rather than his *Smiles*; his *Chidings* rather than his *Kisses*, and these make sad impressions upon them: Thus *Job* complains, The *Arrowes* of the Almighty are within me, the *Poyson* whereof drinketh up my *Spirit*; the *Terrors* of God do fett themselves in *array* against me, *Job* 6. 4. and verse 8, 9. He wanted words to express the greatness of his misery and sorrow, where-with his spirit was even *over-whelmed*: Such sad apprehensions *Heman* also had, Whilst I suffer thy terrors (saith he) I am *distracted*; thy fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrors have cut me off, *Psal.* 88. 15, 16.

Fifthly: These sad thoughts and cogitations are sometimes caused by

violent

violent temptations and suggestions to the most *horrid* evils; as to *Self-murther*, final Despair, *Blasphemy*, cursed *Atheisme*; the Soul is so *terrified* therewith, that it is ready to chuse a sudden *violent* death rather than life. Thou *scarest* me with *Dreams* (saith Job, cap. 7. v. 14, 15.) and *terrifiest* me through *Visions*, so that my *soul* chuseth *strangling* and death rather than my life: Such *horrid* Blasphemous suggestions and *injections* from Satan, some poor *Christians* have sad experience of, which fill their souls with *terror* and *amazement*, and make them even *wearie* of their lives.

Sixthly, Sad Thoughts are *caused* by looking at *Death* in the *Ghastly Glass* of the Law of God, and not in the *Comfortable Glass* of the *Gospel*; and so, Death appears to be the *King* of *Terrors*; and of all *Terrible things*, the most *Terrible*. Oh! What

What will become of me (thinks the poor *Trembling Soul*) when I dye! How shall I be able to shoot that great and vast *Gulph* of Eternity, and to endure the Bitterness and *Terrors* of Death! I that cannot bear with *Patience*, a little Pain of the *Tooth-ake*, Stone, *Strangury*, How shall I look upon that Pale-Horse, and his Rider, whose Name is Death, *Rev 6.8*! Saints themselves, have many times *sad* Thoughts and Apprehensions touching *Death*, when the Soul shall be stript naked of the Body, and all worldly Comforts, and brought into the *Immediate* Presence of God: The *Conscience* here in this Life, being not perfectly and wholly purged and pacifyed, there remaines still some Defilement, some *Guilt*, which causeth some Doubts and Fears even in true Believers.

You have heard the *Causes*, now let us come to the *Remedies* of these sad Thoughts.

First then, If *Melancholy* be the Cause, use the means which God has appointed for the *Cure* of it: *Three Things* I commend to you.

(1.) Ye should (with Dependence on God, the *Supreme Cause* and *Being*) use the most proper *Phyfick*, moderate Exercise, good *Diet*.

As for *Bodily Distempers*, they are ordinarily cured by *Corporal Medicines*, and not by *Spiritual Means*: I say, with Dependance on God for *Success*, ye must use *Phyfick*; for, except the Lord build the House, they Labour but in *vain* that build it, *Psal. 127. 1.* And, King *Asa* is blamed, because in his *Disease* he sought not to the Lord, but to the *Physitians*, *2 Chron. 16. 12.*

(2.) *Con-*

(2.) Converse frequently with wise, compassionate, experienced Christians, such as have been exercised with *Melancholy Distempers* themselves, and are not ignorant of Sathan's *Methods*; otherwise ye speak to them, and they to you, in an *unknown Tongue*.

(3.) Consider, That though the Cure of *Melancholy*, be a torture to the most Learned *Physitians* in the World; yet God, the *Sovereign Physitian*, can easily rebuke it: If He speak the *word*, Be thou *healed*, then thou shalt be found and *whole*: The Lord knows our *frame*, how frail and weak we are, what advantage *Satan* takes against us from these *melancholy Distempers*; and how they disable and *dis-spirit* us for Religious Services, and render our Lives burthensome and uncomfortable to us; and therefore, he will *pity* us, as an indulgent Father pitieth his Children: And, though the *Distemper* should

should not wholly be removed ; yet we may well hope, that he will so abate it (for his own Names sake) that it shall not *overwhelm* us, no, nor hinder our Spiritual Good ; but be a means to humble us, and keep us low in our own Eyes.

Secondly, If your sad *disconsolate* Thoughts be caused by Spiritual Distempers ; as *Unbelief*, carnal Reason, *Doubts* and Fears, something is to be done in the *general* ; and then more particularly.

(1.) In *general* : Endeavour in the Strength of God, to comfort these sad Thoughts, by applying *Spiritual Consolations* suitable to your Distemper ; so you find in the Text, *In the multitude of my Thoughts* (i. e. sad Thoughts) *within me*, *Thy Comforts delight my soul*, *Psal. 94. 9.* Let not the *Consolations* of God seem *small* to thee, neither do thou *indulge* any *secret Sin*, *Job 15. 11.*

(2.) You

(20.) You should often chide your selves *keenly* and rationally for these sad *unbelieving* thoughts: Why art thou *cast* down (O my Soul)! and why art thou *disquieted* within me? *Hope* thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the *health* of my Countenance, and my God, *Ps. 42.*

42. 5, 11. This sadness and dejectedness in Saints is very *unreasonable*, and of ill consequence, for it *drinks* up their spirits, disables and dispirits them for the Service of God and Men: But I will speak more particularly to this *matter*.

First : Does Satan work upon, and by those *Innate Principles* of *Darkness, Unbelief, carnal Reason*, which are in thy *heart* and *nature*; and likewise on thy *Bodily distempers*, especially *Melancholy* : O then take to thee the whole *Armour* of God, especially the *Shield* of *Faith*, that ye may be able to *stand* a-

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gainst the wiles of the Devil, and to quench all his fiery Darts, *Ephes.* 6. 11, 16. Pray earnestly that God would rebuke Satan, and remember that Christ prays for you: And the *Lord* said unto *Satan*, The *Lord* Rebuke thee, O *Satan*: Is not this a *Brand* pluckt out of the fire? *Zach. 3. 2.* Greater is Christ that is in you and for you, than *Satan* that is against you.

Secondly: Do thy sins make thee sad and *disconsolate*? Do they press thee down with a great weight? and doest thou groan under the body of Sin as an *intollerable* burthen, *Rom. 7. 24.* O then remember that sweet Invitation of thy Saviour, Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, *Matth. 11. 28.* Apply to thy soul the *sovereign* Blood of Christ, which *cleanseth* from all Sin,

I Job.

I Joh. 1.7. which pacifieth the Conscience, and purgeth it from dead works, Heb. 9. 14. which speaks better things than the *Blood of Abel*, Heb. 12. 24. Cast the *burthen* of thy sins, thy *guilt*, thy punishment on **Christ**, on whom, God made to *meet* the *Iniquities* of us all, and by whose *Stripes* we are healed, Isa. 53. 5, 6. His soul was *sad* and sorrowful to the death, that thy soul might *rejoyce*; the *Spirit* of the Lord God was upon him, and he was sent by God to bind up the *broaken-hearted*, to give them that *mourn* in *Sion*, *Beauty for Ashes*, the *oyle* of Joy for *Mourning*, and the garment of *Praise* for the spirit of heaviness, Isa. 61. 1, 2, 3.

Thirdly: Doth the Lord hide his *Face* from thee, so that thou behold-*est* not the *light* of His Countenance as formerly? Think with thy self, notwithstanding that God's *Love* is

Unchangeable and Everlasting , He changeth not as Man doth, *Mal. 3.6.* Though he seem to *hide* his Face, and forsake thee for a small *moment*, yet with *Everlasting* kindness will I *embrace* thee, saith the Lord, thy *Redeemer*, *Isa. 54.7,8.* He retaineth not his *Anger* for ever ; He will *turn* again, He will have *Compassion* upon us , *Micah 7.18,19.* If thou prayest to God in *Faith* , He will be *favourable* to thee , and thou shalt see his *Face* with joy , *Job 33.26.* Who is among you that *feareth* the Lord, that *walketh* in darkness , and hath no *light*, let him *trust* in the *Name* of the Lord, and *stay* upon his God, *Isa. 50.10.* Though the tender *Mother* go sometimes where the *Child* doth not see her, yet still her *Bowels* are towards the *Child* : God, when he seems to with-draw from his people, yet still his *Love* and *Compassion* are towards them. Christ upon

upon the *Cross*, cryed out, My God, my God, why hast thou *forsaken* me? that we might not be *forsaken* of God.

Fourthly: Doest thou yet apprehend some tokens of God's wrath, and displeasure, which fills thy heart with fear and *amazement*? Remember that Christ our *Sponsor* and *Surety*, hath *born* the whole *Wrath* of God, the whole *Curse* of the Law for all those that come to him, and believe on him: He hath *Redeemed* us from the *Curse* of the Law, being made a *Curse* for us, *Gal. 3.13*. He it was that *trode* the Wine-press of the *fierceness* of the *Wrath* of God, and there was none to *help* him, *Isa. 63. 5, 6. Rev. 19.15*. By this Jesus we are *delivered* from the *wrath* to come. *1 Thes. 1.10*. The Lord is merciful and gracious, He will not always *Chide*, neither will he keep his *Anger* for ever: As a Father

pityeth his Children, so the Lord pityeth them that fear Him; for He knoweth our *frame*, He remembreth that we are but dust, *Psal. 103. 8, 9, 13, 14.* He will not *contend* for ever, neither will He be always *Wrath*, lest the Spirit should fail before him: He will restore *Comforts* to him that *Mourns*, and will *crease* the fruit of the lips, *Peace, Peace*, *Isaiah 57. 16, 19.*

Fifthly: Doth Satanical *Injecti-*
ons, and violent Temptations to
the most *horrid* Evils and Blasphemies
haunt and hurry thee day and
night. Consider (poor soul) that
they are thy *Tryals*, not thy Sins;
(if thou dost not *yield* thereunto,
but abhor and resist them) thou
art like the modest *Virgin* that's
forcibly Ravished by a wicked Man
without her consent: 'Tis his *sin*,
not hers, though a great Affliction
to her. Oh flye to the *Throne* of
Grace

Grace and Mercy for help and succor in this time of *Need*; *rest* thy self on God's free promise and word of *Grace*: He is *Faithful*, and will not suffer you to be *Tempted* above that you are able, but will with the *Temptation* also, make a way to *escape*, that ye may be able to *bear* it, 1 Cor. 10. 13. The Lord is *Faithful*, who shall *establish* you and keep you from *Evil*, 2 Thes. 3. 3. The Lord shall *preserve* thee from all *Evil*, He shall *preserve* thy *soul*, Psal. 121. 7. Thou shalt be *kept* by the *power* of God, through *Faith* to *Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Let thy soul take *Sanctuary* in the free *Promise* of *Grace*.

Sixthly: Doth the fear of *Death* and *Eternity* cause sad thoughts of heart in thee? O learn to look at *Death* in the comfortable *Glass* of the *Gospel* of *Christ*, and not in the dreadful *glass* of the *Law*: *Death*

to a Believer is swallowed up in *Victory*; the *Sting* of this *Serpent* is taken away by Christ: O *Death* (saith he) I will be thy *Death*; O *Grave*, I will be thy *Victory*. Christ hath *conquer'd* *Death*, perfum'd the *Grave*, and opened a way for poor Sinners to Everlasting *Glory*: The *Sting* of *Death* is *Sin*, and the *Strength* of *Sin* is the *Law*: But, Thanks be to God, which giveth us the *Victory* through our Lord Jesus Christ, *1 Cor. 15. 56, 57.* Forasmuch, as the Children are *Partakers* of Flesh and Blood, Christ Himself took *part* of the same, that through *Death*, he might destroy him that had the Power of *Death*; that is, the Devil; and deliver them, who through *fear* of *Death*, were all their Life-time subject to *Bondage*, *Heb. 2. 14, 15.*

Here

Here five or six special Helps and *Directions*, when ye are troubled and perplexed with *sad* Thoughts and much Darkness upon your *spirits*.

DIRECTION, I.

Call to Remembrance what hath formerly pass'd betwixt God and your *Soul*; what Love-tokens ye have received from him, (though you be now under a *Cloud*): As, when the *Title* of your *Land* is questioned, you search old *Records* and *Evidences*; so ye should do in this *Case*: Thus *David*, when his *Soul* had before refused to be *Comforted*, and his *Spirit* was in a manner *overwhelmed*; yet now he would consider the *Dayes* of *Old*, the *Years* of *Antient* *Times*, and call to Remembrance his *Songs* in the *Night*, &c. *Psal.* 77. 2, 3, 5, 6. And *Job*, when the *Wrath* of *God* seemed to be

kindled against him, and God counted him as one of his *Enemies*, and his *Reines* were consumed within him; yet still saith he (Job 19. 11, 27, 28.) The *Root* of the *Matter* is found in me: He acknowledged, that he had the *Root* of true *Faith* in him; and knew, that his *Redeemer* liveth: Though the *Exercise* of his *Faith* was at present suspended, as to the comfortable *Effects* of it; yet, he had an *evidence* of his good *Estate*, from his former *Experience*: As in the *Winter-Season*, though the *Plant* seems to wither, yet the *root* of it still remaines in the *Earth*; and when the *Spring* comes, and the *Sun* shines upon it with a powerful *Influence*, it will appear.

DIRECTION, II.

Plead and expostulate *Humbly* with thy *God*, when he seems to hide his *Face* from thee; make use of

of Arguments in thy Prayers taken from the Infiniteness of God's *Mercy*, and the Greatness of thy *Misery*: Thy Saviour, in His great *Soul-Agony* and *Distress*, prayed often and earnestly, *Luk. 22. 44.* Is any among you *Afflicted* (saith the Apostle, *Fam. 5. 13.*) let him *Pray*.

This *Direction* may be drawn out and improved in five Particulars.

(1.) Suppose thy *Case* be as sad as *Jobs* was (*Cap. 10. v. 15, 16, 17.*) thou art full of *Distraction* and *Confusion*; the Lord *hunts* thee as a fierce *Lyon*, and increaseth his *Indignation* upon thee; contending still with thee, as if he were thy greatest *Enemy*; Yet now, fall down and *prostrate* thy self humbly at his *Feet*, as a poor, silly, helpless Lamb; and, if thou must *needs* dye and perish, yet dye at His *Feet*, mourning and bleeding out thy Heart.

Heart in Sighs and Tears. Take heed of a *fretting* murmuring Spirit, which is exceeding offensive to God: Be *still* and quiet; not a word; put thy Mouth in the *Dust*: It is good that a Man should *hope*, and quietly *wait* on God, *Lam.* 3. 36, 29. I will bear the *Indignation* of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, (saith the *Church*, *Mic.* 7. 9.) Kiss the *Rod* as a submissive Child, and acknowledge that it is of the Lord's *Mercy*, that thou art not *consumed*.

(2.) When God seems to pursue thee hard, and to bend his *Bow*, and shoot his Arrows against thee; desire him humbly to Remember the Thoughts of *Love* and *Peace*, which he had to poor Sinners from *Eternity*: These Thoughts he delights in; they are more than can be numbered, *Psal.* 40. 5. and what, Are they *restrained* in Him! Hath God

God forgotten to be *Gracious* ! Hath He for ever shut up his *tender* Mercies ! Surely, He hath not, *Psal.* 77.9. Put him in mind of that infinite All-sufficient *Righteousness* and Merit, which is in Christ, whereof Himself hath no *need*; no, nor the Blessed *Angels* that never sinned; But, it is reserved for poor sinful Men and Women, such as thou art: If thou sayest, Thou art *unworthy*; yea, but He loves freely, *Hos.* 14. 4. If the *greatness* of thy Sins be objected against thee, tell him, That there is *plenteous* Redemption for thee in (and with) Christ, *Psal.* 130. 7. Art thou *ungodly* and wicked in thy self? the Scripture saith, That he *Justifies* the ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. and that Christ received *Gifts* for Sinners, yea, for the *Rebellious*; that the Lord God might *dwell* with them, *Psal.* 68. 18. Art thou no better than

than a *Dogg*? Yea, but the *Doggs* they eat the *Crumbs* that fall from their Master's *Table*; Christ hath reserved some *Crumbs* of *Mercy* and *Comfort* for thee, *Math.* 15.

(3.) If he still *pursue* thee in his *Anger*, and set thee as a *Mark* to shoot at, so that thou art a *Burthen* to thy self, *Job* 7. 20. Ask him humbly with *Tears* in thy Eyes, What he *aimes* at? Is it to have the *Victory* over thee, that he might be *justifyed* in his *Sayings*, and might *over-come* when he is *Judged*, *Rom.* 3. 4? Tell him *freely*, Thou wilt *yeild* to him as a poor *Captive*, and stand out with him in nothing; and, that he shall need no other *Judge* or *Jury* to condemn thee, but thy self: Thou art very willing to *justify* him in all things, and to *sentence* and condemn thy self; only beseech him to *consider*, what *Victo-*

ry, what Honour it will be to so Great and Infinite a God as He is, to pursue a little *dry Stubble*, to break a poor *Leaf* that is bruis'd already, and *crumbles* under his Fingers if he do but touch it, *Job 13. 25.* *Say* to Him, *Thou art Impar Congressus*; *Thou art* far from being an *equal* Match to Him; and, *He is so Noble, so Generous, as not to set Himself against a Worm, against a poor weak Leaf, that yeilds and falls under His Hand;* having said, *That He will not contend for ever, lest the Spirit should utterly fail before him, Isa. 57. 19.*

(4.) If it should be hinted to thee, as if God would *glorify* Himself in thy *Eternal Destruction and Condemnation*; tell him, 'Tis true, he may; But yet, before he thrust his *Sword* in thee, desire Him (with Reverence and Submission) to *con-*
sider.

sider, That he first sheathed it in the *Blood* of His Son; and what profit will there be in thy *Blood* and Destruction: If Satisfaction to Divine Justice be his end and designe, He may have that in and from the *Propitiatory*-Sacrifice, and Death of Christ; and so, be no loser: And, as for thy Salvation, it will be more for his Glory, than thy Condemnation. If he require more *Obedience* of thee, Alas, this is not the *way* to perform it; when thy poor Soul is *distracted* with his Terrors, and thou art as a Man that hath no Strength, numbred amongst the *Dead*, (as *Heman* speaks, *Psal. 88. 4, 5, 15.*) The more Spiritual Peace and Joy any *Soul* hath, the more Service and Obedience it will be able to *perform* to God, who loves a cheerful Giver: The *Joy* of the Lord, is the *Strength* of the Soul, *Nehem. 8. 10.* If it be

sug-

suggested to thee; That if thou hadst more Assurance, Joy, and Inlarge-
ment, thou wouldest abuse it, and grow wanton; Tell God humbly, That he may also prevent that, if He please, by the Power of His Grace; and by writing the Law of Love in thy Heart by his Spirit, which will constraine thee to love Him, and to live to Him, 2 Cor. 5. 14. And, Love is as strong as Death; Many Waters cannot quench it, neither can the Floods drown it, Cant. 8. 6, 7. And, though thou hast a froward and stubborn Heart, which thou canst not chuse but sadly complain of; yet, so had he whom the Prophet speaks of, Isa. 57. 17, 18. God hid his Face from him; was wrath, and smote him; and he went on frowardly in the way of his Heart: Yet, for all this (saith the Lord) I have seen his wayes, and will heal him, and restore Comforts to him.

(5.) If

(5.) If thy *Temptation* be sever great, and thy *Condition* so sad, *Him* as if there were no other *Remedy*, serv but God and thou must part; yet and labour notwithstanding to have *good* *jeſt* thoughts of God, and to bless *Him* for those *glorious* *Attributes* and excellencies of *Mercy*, *Truth*, *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, that are in him: Bless *Him* for his *mercy* and goodness to others, and for enabling them to serve him with chearfulness and success. Bless him for the *good* things which thou hast *formerly* received from *Him*; and if thou hast done, or suffered any thing for God in thy time, wish with all thy soul it had been a *thousand* times more: And confess thy self unworthy, lesser than the *least* of those Mercies he hath bestowed on thee; and that thou art *infinitely* ingaged to *Him* for what is past, if *He* should cast thee off for time to come, and ne- ver.

be sever *smile* upon thee again : *Desire*
sad *Him* only that *He* would pre-
serve, *serve* and *maintain* in thee good
yet and *honourable* thoughts of His *Ma-*
good *jesty*, that thou maist not in the
him least derogate from His *Honour*, or
and *blaspheme* his *Holy Name*, how-
wif- ever he is pleased to *deal* with thee
m: as to *Spiritual Peace* and *Comfort* :
od- And who knows, but whilst thou
em art thus *bemoaning* thy self (as *E-*
nd *phraim* did) though the *Lord* at
od present seem to look *Stern*, and to
et speak *Angerly* to thee, yet he will
d quickly come and speak *Peace* to
l thy soul, and list up the light of
his *Countenance* on thee. I have
surely heard *Ephraim* bemoaning
himself (saith the *Lord*). Is *E-*
phraim my dear *Son*, Is he a *plea-*
sant *Child* : For since I *speak* against
him, I do earnestly *remember* him
still ; therefore my *Bowels* are trou-
bled for him ; I will surely have
mercy.

mercy on him, Fer. 31. 18, 19
20.

DIRECTION III.

Call to mind and improve the Soul sorrows and Agonies of thy Saviour and Surety, who bore the Wrath of God in his soul for thee, that thy poor Pensive soul might be comforted and delivered from the Terrors of God: His Soul was heavy and sorrowful to the Death; yea, he was surrounded and environ'd with sorrow and amazement of Spirit, and cryed out bitterly on the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Matth. 27. 46. And in the days of his Flesh, He offered up Prayers and Applications, with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from Death, and was heard in that he feared, *Heb. 5.7.* Now tell God humbly and believingly, that he hath

19 hath laid thy Sin, *Guilt, Curse*, upon his Son, and in the fierceness of his *Wrath* fell upon him, standing in thy stead and room, that he might set thee *free* (who is not in the least able to *wrestle* with the Terrors of God); say to him that his own blessed Son hath drank off the *Cup* of Divine *Wrath* to the bottom, even the very *dregs* of it; and therefore why should thy poor *soul* (which is redeemed by the precious Blood of thy Saviour) cast any part of this bitter *Cup*? Did God withdraw the comforts of his Spirit from the *humane* Nature of Christ, and fill it with *sadness* and sorrow for thy sake, that thou mightest obtain Spiritual *peace* and *comfort*? O then why shouldst not thou earnestly pray for, and expect the fruits of Christ's Agony and Death in having thy soul revived and filled with spiritual *peace* and *joy*?

DIRECTION IV.

Renew thy Faith and *Repentance* in good earnest, as if thou had'st never done it before. Suppose it be suggested to thee by *Satan*, that thou did'st never as yet *truly* believe and repent of thy sins? Thou maist Answer thus, *Well*, I will not question that *now*, but resolve by the *Grace* of God forth-with to *Repent* heartily of my *Sins*, and believe on the Lord Jesus. Some Christians are apt to look back altogether on what they have done, and if that do not afford them comfort, then they are ready to give up all for *lost*, and to *sink* under discouragement. But though a Christian may sometimes look back, and reflect on his former *evidences* and experiences; yet certainly, to cast thy self at present by a *direct* act of Faith, upon the free *Grace* of God in the *Gospel*.

Gospel-promise, is the shortest cut, and the readiest way to silence thy doubts, and Satans suggestions; as sometimes it falls out, that a Man may with as little charge and trouble, obtain a new Lease, as prove the old one good and Authentical. Be peremptory and resolute therefore in believing and casting thy self on a *Crucified* Jesus, and say with *Esther*, I will go to the *King*, and if I *Perish*, I Perish, *Esther* 4. 16. and with *Job*, Though he *Kill* me, yet will I *trust* in him, *Job* 13. 15. Venture thy *Soul* upon him, as one that's ready to *sink* when the *Bladders* are taken from him, will yet venture to *swim* without *Bladders*. And as the four *Lepers* said one to another, Why sit we here until we *dye*? If we enter into the *City*, the *famine* is there, and we shall *dye*; and if we sit still here, we shall *dye* also: Therefore, let us

us fall into the *Host* of the *Syrians*; if they save us *alive*, we shall live; and if they *Kill* us, we shall but dye, 2 King. 7. 3, 4. So *resolve* to throw your self upon Christ, and if ye must dye, then dye at his *feet*: But this is so far from being the *way* to Perish, that it is the *direct* way to true Peace, Comfort, and Happiness.

DIRECTION V.

Trust in the *Name* of God *Je-hovah* for Comfort and Salvation. He that walks in *darkness*, and sees no light, let him trust in the *Name* of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God, Isa. 50.

* Vid. *Mr. Goodwins Child of light walking in darkness.*

10. * the consideration of the Sweet, Gracious,

Merciful *Nature* and *Name* of God, will support and keep the soul from sinking: The *Name* of the Lord is

a strong *Tower*, the Righteous run-
eth to it, and is safe, *Prov. 18. 10.*
There is enough in the *Name* of
God to Answer all our *objections*,
and resolve all our doubts; as this
name was *proclaimed* to *Moses*, The
Lord, the God, *merciful* and *grati-
ous*, *long-suffering*, and abundant in
Goodness and *Truth*, keeping *mercy*
for thousands, forgiving *Iniquity*,
Transgression, and *Sin*, *Exod. 34.
6, 7.* This *Name* of God is to be
found, and is revealed in and by
Christ to poor Sinners. Harken
to him, and *obey* his *Voyce* (saith
the Lord) for my *Name* is in him,
Exod. 23. 21. God was in Christ,
Reconciling the World unto himself,
not *imputing* their *Trespasses* unto
them, *2 Cor. 5. 19.* This is the
Name where-with he shall be called
the *Lord* our *Righteousness*, *Jer.
23. 6.* And his *Name* shall be *Je-
sus*, for he shall *save* his *People*

from their sins, *Matth. 1. 21.*
When we see nothing in our selves
to rest upon, (as in the case of de-
sertion) no *sight* of Graces, no *light*
of comfort therefrom, as in *Pauls*
Voyage by Sea for many days to-
gether, neither the *light* of the Sun,
nor *Stars* appeared, *Act. 27. 20.*
Yet then the *Name* of God will
stay and bear up the drooping spirit
of a **Christian**. My *flesh* and my
heart faileth (saith *David*) but God
is the *strength* of my heart, and
my *portion* for ever, *Psal. 73. 26.*
And though my *House* be not so
with God, *i. e.* as the *tender* Grass
springing out of the Earth by the
clear *shining* of the *Sun* after Rain,
yet he hath made, with me, an *e-*
verlasting Covenant, ordered in all
things and *sure*; for this is all my
Salvation, and all my *desire*, al-
though he make it not to grow.
2 Sam. 23. 5.

DIRECTION VI.

[on which I shall a little inlarge.]

Furnish thy self with fit *matter* out of the holy *Scriptures*, for Heav-
enly thoughts and *meditations*, that
thy heart may *endite* and meditate
a good matter, and thy *Tongue* may
be as the *Pen* of a ready Writer,
Psal. 45. 1. The Lord help thee
(poor *soul*) not only to *read* these
Divine writings, but to meditate
therein *day* and night, to *bide* them
and lay them up in thy heart as a
divine *Cordial* to revive and com-
fort thee; as a divine *Lamp* to guide
and direct thee, *Psal. 119. 92, 105.*
and as part of the spiritual *Armour*,
to enable thee to *vanquish* thy spi-
ritual *Enemies* in the Hour of Tem-
tation, *Eph. 6. 13.*

David, even in those dark times,
before the *Incarnation* of Christ,

professeth of himself, that the *Word* of God was in the mid'st of his *Bowels*, *Psal.* 40. 8. And that he had *bid* the word in his *heart*, that he might not *sin* against God, *Psal.* 19. 11. And *Hierom* tells us of one *Nepotian*, who by long and assiduous *Meditation* of the holy *Scriptures*, had made his breast the *Library* of Jesus Christ, in respect of *Divine* thoughts and cogitations. *Holy Job* esteem'd the *Word* of God more than his *necessary* food, *Job* 23. 12. And the *Psalmist* preferr'd it before the *Honey* and the *Honeycomb*; before great *spoyles*, and thousands of *Gold* and *Silver*, *Psal.* 19. 9. *Psal.* 119. 103, 162. And the blessed *Apostle* commands us not only to have the *word* of Christ *with* us, but *in* us; and not only to have it *in* us, but to have it *dwell-ing* and abiding *in* us richly, in all *Wisdom* and spiritual understanding, *Col.* 3. 16. As

of Disconsolate Thoughts. A

As for Mens writings, they are mingled with Vanity, Mistakes, Imperfections, Corruptions, favouring too much of a carnal Spirit; but God's Word * is satisfactorily *full*, without all Vanity, most *Wise*, Faithful and True, without Falshood or *Folly*, compleatly perfect, without the least Imperfection, most *pure* and refined, without Corruption or *Carnal* mixtures, wholly *Spiritual*, sweetly resembling that most *Divine* Spirit which endited the *Scriptures*.

* *In Sacra Scriptura quicquid docet veritas, quicquid precipitur bonitas, quicquid promittitur felicitas: Nam Deus veritas est sine fallacia, bonitas sine malitia, felicitas sine miseria.*

Here are unfolded the *mysteries* of the Covenant of Grace made up of Heavenly *Cordials* for *Sin-sick* souls: Here are the *promises* of this

life, and of that which is to come, exceeding great and precious: Here are the *comforts* of God able to counterpoise and overcome the greatest sadness and sorrow.

Art thou poor? Here's a *Treasury* of Riches: Art thou sick? here's a *Shop* of *Soul-medicines*: Art thou fainting? here's a *Cabinet* of precious Cordials: Art thou Afflicted? here's thy *Solace*: Art thou Persecuted? here's thy *Protection*: Art thou deserted? here's thy *support*: Art thou Tempted? here's thy *Victory*: Whilst thou livest, here's the *Rule* of thy Conversation; and when thou dyest, here's the *hope* of thy *Glorification*; and therefore, well might one of the *Antients* profess that he adored the fulness of the *Scriptures*: And *Luther* himself used to say, he would rather eat up his own *Writings* (which yet were instrumental to give much Heavenly light

light and knowledge) than that People, by reading them, should neglect the reading and studying of the Holy Scriptures.

This is the Book of Books (as David said of Goliath's Sword) there's none like that.

*Ex aliis paleæ viles, hinc grana
leguntur*

*Aurea : Tu paleas linquito, grana
lege.*

Mens Books with worthless Chaff
are stor'd ;

God's Scriptures golden grains afford.

Reject the Chaff, and spend thy
pains,

In Gleaning up these golden Grains.

The Holy Scripture is profitable
for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Cor-
rection, for Instruction in the paths

of Righteousness, and for *Support* and *Consolation*; that drooping *dejected Spirits*, may not be overwhelmed with *Satan's Temptations*.

This sweet *Consolatory* *Vertue*, and *Soul-supporting* *Property* of the *Scriptures*, is demonstrated by the happy *Experience* and *Sense* of *Spiritual Comfort* and *Refreshing*, which *Saints* find therein; even such of them as are exercised with great *Dolors* and *Troubles* of *Spirit*.

Thus *David* did *comfort* and support himself with the *word* of *God* in his saddest *Affliction*: This is my *Comfort* in my *Affliction* (saith he) for thy *Word* hath quickned me: And, unless thy *word* had been my *delight*, I had *perished* in my *Affliction*, *Psal.* 119. 50, 51, 92.

Paul writes unto the *Saints* at *Thessalonica*, that they should *comfort*

fort one another with these Words, *I Thes. 4. 13.* And the Love-sick Spouse (being ready to fall into a Spiritual Swound through the Sense of Christ's *Estrangements* from Her) cryes out to the Ministers of the *Word*, the Friends of the *Bridegroom*; O stay me with *Flaggons*, and comfort me with *Apples*, for I am sick of Love, *Cant. 2. 5.* Wine and Apples are pleasant refreshing Cordials to fainting Spirits; And, so are the *precious* Promises, and sweet Doctrines of Christ, to sad and pensive Souls.

Augustine, and his dear Companion *Alipius*, How were they in their great *Soul-Afflictions*, raised up and *comforted*, with two Sentences of Scripture? *Augustine* (as he tells us in his *Confessions*, lib. 8. Cap. 12. Tom. 1.) deeply laying to heart his *sin* and Misery, such a mighty *storm* arose in his *soul*,

as brought a shower of Tears ; where-upon, he with-drew from *Alipius* a good distance, that he might more freely and fully pour out himself in *Tears*. I laid me down (saith he) under a certain *Fig-Tree*, I know not how ; and I opened *Sluce* to *Tears*, and the *Floods* of mine Eyes burst out, thy acceptable Sacrifice : And, not in these *Words*, but to this *Sense*, I spake many things to *Thee* ; But thou, O *Lord*, how long ! How long wilt thou be *angry* for ever ! O *Remember* not former Iniquities ! For, I felt my self held by them, and I cast forth miserable Expressions : How long ! How long ! *To-Morrow*, and *To-Morrow* ! Why not now ? Why not this Hour, an end of my Filthiness ? These things I spake, and *wept* in the bitter *Con-
trition* of my Heart. And behold ! I heard a *Voyce* (as of a Boy or Girl,

Girle, I know not whether) from a neighbouring House, saying, (with singing, and oft repeating) * *Take up and Read,* *Take up and Read.* And presently, with changed countenance, I inten-
tively began to think, whether Boyes in Playing were wont to sing any such thing; Nor, could I remem-
ber, that ever I heard it. The vio-
lence of my Tears being repressed, I rose up; Interpreting nothing else to be divinely commanded me, than that I should open the Book, and read what Chapter I first found; For, I had heard of *Antonius*, that by Reading of the *Gospel* (which he happily light upon) he was ad-
monished, as if what he had read, had been spoken to him; *Go, and sell all that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Tre-
sure in Heaven, and come follow me;*

me; and that, by this *Oracle* he was presently converted to thee. Therefore, being thus *incited*, I returned to the same place where *Alipius* sate; for, there I had laid the *Apostle's Book*, when I thence rose: I snatch'd it up, opened, and silently *read* that Chapter on which mine *Eyes* were first *cast*: Not in *Rioting* and *Drunkenness*, not in *Chambering* and *Wantonness*, not in *Strife* and *Envying*; But, *put* ye on the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and make no *Provision* for the *Flesh*, to fulfill the *Lusts* thereof, *Rom. 13. 13, 14.* Nor would I *read* further; nor was there *need*: For presently, with the *close* of this *Sentencce*, as it were with the *light* of *Security* infused into mine *Heart*, all my *darksom Doubting*s fled away. Then, either putting my *Finger* in the place, or what other *signe* I know not, I shut the *Book*; and, with a *chearful Countenance*,

tenance, I told it to *Alipius*. But, what was done in *himself*, which I knew not, he thus declared: He asks to see what I *read*, I shewed it; and, he attended further than I read, I not knowing what followed; But it followed, *Him* that is *weak* in the *Faith* receive ye, *Rom. 14. 1.* which he *applyed* to *himself*, and *opened* unto me: But, by this *Admonition* he was *Confirmed*; and, without all *turbulent delay*, was *conjoyned* in a good *Pleasure* and *purpose*, most *congruous* to his *Manners*, wherein he long ago excelled me. Thereupon, we go in to my *Mother*; tell her: She *rejoyceth*; We declare how it was done; She *exults* and *Tryumphs*, and *blesseth* *Thee* who art *able* to do, *above All* that we are to ask or think; Because she *saw*, that thou hadst *granted* her far more concerning me, than she was *wont* with her *miserable*

rable and lamentable *Groans*, to ask of Thee. Thus far *Augustine*.

Who would not now delight to read and understand the *Divine Scriptures*, whereby *Augustine* and *Alipius* were thus Converted and Comforted?

Mr. *Fox*, in his *Acts and Monuments* tells us, That Mr. *Bilney*, the blessed *Martyr*, having been long under great *Doubts* and *Fears* in his Soul, (whil'st he adhered to the *Popish Doctrines*); at length, opening the *New-Testament*, he light on that *Text*, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* This is a *faithful Saying*, and worthy of all *acceptation*, That Christ *Jesus* came into the World, to *save* Sinners, of whom I am *chief*; which God so blessed to him, that thereby his *doubts* and *Fears* were *dispell'd*, and he received much *spiritual Peace and Comfort* in the *Assurance*

rance of the love of God from this free promise of Grace.

Bishop *Latimer* (that Godly Martyr) standing at the *Stake*, ready to shed his blood for the *Truth*, lifting up his Eyes to *Heaven* with an amiable and chearful Countenance, comforted himself with that Scripture, *Faithful is God who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able*, 1 Cor. 10. 13.

Alice Benden, Martyr, being kept in *Prison* nine weeks with *Bread* and *Water*, and *Sequestered* from her *Companions*, was in great heaviness and *Soul* distress, till on a *Night*, as she was in her *sorrowful Supplications*, rehearsing those words, *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, &c.* And again, The *Right Hand* of the most High can *change* all this; she received much *comfort*.

Mr. *Midgeley*, Minister at *Ratchdale* in *Yorkshire*, oppressed with melan-

melancholly thoughts and temptations to *Self-murther*; and going down to the Water-side to *Drown* himself, having the *New-Testament* in his Pocket, it came into his thoughts, before he flung himself in, to read a little in his *Testament*; and opening the same, he happily cast his *Eye* upon that precious word of *Grace*, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, and I will give you *Rest*, Matth. 11. 28, 29. Whereupon this poor *tempted* Soul was much *revived*, and broke forth into these words, *Say'st thou so? then I will not drown my self.* 'Tis well observed by a *Godly* Writer, that we had better want *Meat*, *Drink*, the *light* of the *Sun*, *Aire*, *Earsh*, and all the *Elements*, yea, *Life* it self, than that one *sweet* Sentence of our *Saviour*, *Come unto me*, &c.

Mrs. Katherine Brettergh (who was wont to task her self to the reading at

at least eight *Chapters* of Scripture every day) in her *Sickness*, before her Death * she fell into great *distress* and *anguish* of *Spirit*; sometimes she would cast her *Bible* from her, and say, it was indeed the *Book of Life*, but she had *read* the same unprofitably, and therefore feared it was become to her the *Book of Death*: Sometimes she would *say* her *sins* had made her a prey to *Satan*, a *spectacle* to the *World*, a *disgrace* to *Religion*, and a *shame* to her *Husband*, *Kindred*, and all *true Christians*: And here she would *weep* most bitterly; she wished she had never been *Born*, or that she had been any other *Creature* rather than a *Woman*: She would often *cry* out *Woe, Woe, Woe, &c.* a *weak*, a *woful*, a *wretched*, a *forsaken Woman*! and utter such like *pittifull Complaints*

* Vid. *Mr. Will. Leigh's Souls-Solace against sorrow.*

plaints against her self, with *Tears* continually trickling down her *Cheeks*. But at *last*, before her death, she was *raised* up to unspeakable joys and comforts by applying *Scripture*-promises: Oh said she, my *soul* hath been compassed about with *terrors* of *Death*, fear *within*, and fear without; the sorrows of *Hell* were upon me, and a *roaring* *Wilderness* of *Woe* was within me (which she repeated again and again): But *Blessed*, *Blessed*, *Blessed* be the Lord my God, who hath not *left* me *Comfortless*. One time she took her *Bible* in her hand, and looking up towards *Heaven*, she said, O *Lord*, it is good for me that I have been *Afflicted*, that I might *learn* thy *Statutes*; the *Word* of the Lord is *better* to me than *thousands* of *Gold* and *Silver*. She *desired* her *Husband* to read some part of *Scripture* to her; he read that *excellent*

Chapter, John 17. and as he read v. 9. she interrupted him, saying, O Lord *Jesus*, dost thou indeed pray for me? O Blessed and Sweet Saviour, how wonderful, how wonderful, how wonderful are thy Mercies! When he came to v. 24. Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, &c. Stay, said she, and let me meditate on the goodness of the Lord, for now I perceive and feel the Countenance of Christ, my *Redeemer*, is turned towards me, and the bright shining Beams of his Mercy are spread over me: Oh happy am I that ever I was Born, to see this blessed day: Praise, praise, Oh praise the Lord for his *Mercies*, for He hath brought me out of darkness, and the shadow of death! O my sweet *Saviour*! shall I be one with thee, as thou art one with thy *Father*? and wilt thou Glorifie me with that *Glory* which

which thou had'st with the *Father* before the *World* was? - And dost thou so *love* me that am but *Dust* and *Ashes*, as to make me partaker of *Glory* with *Christ*? What am I, poor *Wretch*, that thou art so *mindful* of me? Oh how *wonderful*, how *wonderful*, how *wonderful* is thy *Love*? To a *Christian Friend* that came to *see* her, wondering at her *joys*; she said, O the *joys*, the *joys*, the *joys* that I feel in my *soul*! they be *wonderful*, they be *wonderful*, they be *wonderful*! Thus she was *ravished* in *Spirit*, and *triumphed* in the *praises* of *God*. At *last*, with a sweet *Countenance* and still *Voyce*, she said, My *Warfare* is accomplished, and mine *Iniquities* are pardoned: Lord, whom have I in *Heaven* but thee? And I have *none* on *Earth* but thee: My *Flesh* faileth, and my *Heart* also, but God is the *strength* of mine *Heart*, and

and my *Portion* for ever. He that preserveth *Jacob*, and defendeth his *Israel*, he is my *God*, and will guide me unto *Death*. Guide me O *Lord*, my *God*, and suffer me not to *faint*, but keep my soul in *safety*, and with that she presently fell *asleep* in the *Lord*.

Mr. *John Holland*, an eminent *Saint* and *Preacher* of the *Gospel*, did wonderfully raise and *comfort* himself with the *holy* *Scriptures*; even in the *Valley* of the *Shadow* of *Death*, his *Heart* was *replenished* with *Heavenly* *Thoughts* and *Delights*. The *Day* before he *dyed*, he called for the *holy* *Bible* with these very *words*, *Come*, O *come*! *Death* *approacheth*, let us gather some *Flowers* to *comfort* in this *Hour*: And, turning with his own *Hands* to the *Eight Chapter* of the *Epistle* to the *Romans*, he gave me the *Book* (saith Mr. *Leigb*, who relates

relates these Passages in a printed Book) and bade me *Read*: At the end of every *Verse*, he made a *Se-lah* or Pause, and gave the Sense in such sort and feeling, as (we perceived) was much to his own *Comfort*, but more to our Joy and *Wonder*. Having thus continued his *Meditation* and *Exposition* for the space of *two Hours*, or more; on the *sudden* he said, *O stay your reading*; What *Brightness* is this I see? Have ye *light* up any *Candles*? To which it was *Answered*, *No*; It is the *Sun-Shine*: For, it was about five a *Clock*, in a clear *Summer's-Evening*. *Sun-shine* (saith he?) nay, my *Saviour's Shine*: Now, *farewell* *World*, welcome *Heaven*; The *Day-Starr* from on high hath *visited* mine *Heart*. O speak it when I am *gone*, and Preach it at my *Funeral*, That God dealeth *familiarly* with *Man*! I feel his *Mercy*, I see his

his Majesty, whether in the *Body*
or out of the *Body*, I cannot tell;
God, He knoweth; But, I see *Things*
that are *unutterable*: And, *raising*
himself, as *Jacob* did upon his *staff*,
he shut up his blessed *Life*, with
these blessed *words*; O, *What a happy*
Change shall I make! from
Night to *Day*, from *Darknes's* to
Light; from *Death* to *Life*, from
Sorrow to *Solace*; from a *factious*
World, to a *Heavenly* *Being*: O
my dear Bretheren, Sisters, and
Friends, it pittieth me to *leave*
you behind; yet, *Remember* my
Death when I am *gone*: And, what
I now *feel*, I hope you shall *find*
ere you *aye*, That *God doth and will*
deal familiarly with Men. And now
thou *fiery Chariot*, that came down
to fetch up *Elijah*, carry me to my
happy *Hold*; And all ye blessed
Angels, who attended the *Soul* of
Lazarus to bring it up to *Heaven*,
bear

bear me, O bear me into the *Bo-*
som of my best *Beloved*; *Amen*,
Amen. Come Lord *Jesus*, come
quickly. And so he fell *asleep*.

O therefore, *Enrich thy Soul* with
those Hevenly Treasures, and *fill thy*
Heart with *those blessed Truths*,
*and Divine Mysterie*s, that are con-
tained in the Scriptures; as the
Saints whom I have mentioned, and
many thousands more have done in
their great Straits and Temptations.
Acknowledge the *Goodness* of *God*,
and magnifie the *Riches* of *his*
Grace towards *poor Sinners*: Many
and wonderful, O *Lord my God*, are
Thy Thoughts to *us-ward*, they are
more than can be numbered, *Psal.*
40. 5. And again, How *pretties*
are thy Thoughts unto me, O *God*?
How great is the *Sum* of *them*, *Psal.*
139. 17.

Now

Now, that thou may'st have a right and spiritual understanding of the Holy Scriptures (whilst thou readest them) for the benefit and comfort of thy sad disconsolate soul:

First, Beg Wisdom of the only Wise God, who gives liberally and upbraideth not, Jam. 1. 5. that by God's Wisdom thou mayest know God's Mind, and discern the true sense and meaning of the Scriptures by the Assistance of the Divine Spirit which Indited the same. What the Woman said of Jacob's-Well, may be truly affirmed of the Scriptures; Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the Well is deep, John 4. 11. Scripture mysteries are profound, and our Capacities but shallow; desire the Lord therefore to anoint thine eyes with Eye-

D salve,

salve, that thou mayest see; and to open thine *Understanding*, that thou may'st rightly and spiritually *understand* the *Scriptures*, *Rev.* 3. 18. *Psal.* 119. 18. *Luk.* 24. 45. *Luther* professed, that he got more *Understanding* by *Prayer* than by all his *Study* besides.

Secondly : Labour for a truly *gracious* *Spirit*, which being once *attain'd*, thou wilt be able to penetrate into the inward *Marrow* and *mystery* of the *Holy* *Scriptures*. He will best comprehend the true *sence* of *Scripture* in his head, that hath it written and *impress'd* upon his heart. Thou wilt never (as one truly observes) understand *Paul's* meaning, unless thou art *endued* with *Paul's* spirit. The *Secret* of God is with them that *fear* him, and he will *shew* them his *Covenant*, *Psal.* 25.

25. 12, 14. And Christ in the *Gospel*, will manifest himself to them that *Love him*; and such shall know the *mind of the Lord*, *Job. 14. 21, 22, 23.*

Thirdly : Come to the reading and perusing of the *Scriptures* with an *umble self-denying* frame of heart, and be not *puffed up* with a vain *Conceit* of thine own knowledge and *attainments*. He that *thinks he knowes any thing*, *knowes nothing* yet as he ought to know, *1 Cor. 8. 2.* *Empty Vessels* are most *receptive*, and so are *self-emptied Christians*. It's a great *help to Knowledg*, not to be *ignorant* of our *Ignorance*. * The *fruitful showers* quickly glide away from the *lofty Hills*; But they stay and smoke in the *Low-Valleys*. God, who *resists the Proud*, gives

* *Deo meo gratias ago quod Ignorantium meam non ignoro.*

Grace and Spiritual Knowledge to the humble: With the Lowly is true Wisdom, *Prov. 11. 2.* And the Meek and Humble he will teach his Way, *Psal. 25. 9. Math. 11. 25.*

Fourthly: Observe and eye Christ, and Salvation by him, as the very *Scope, Marrow, and Substance* of the whole Scriptures: What are the *Scriptures*, but as it were the Spiritual *swadling-Cloaths* of the Holy Child *Jesus*? He is the *Truth* and Substance of all the *Types* and *Shaddows*: He is the *Matter* and *Quintesence* of the *Covenant* of Grace, under all the Administrations thereof. The *Center* of all the *Promises*, In whom they are, yea, and Amen, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* The *Thing* signified, sealed, and exhibited in all the *Sacraments* of the Old and New-Testament. The *holy Scripture*, What is it else but Christ's *Light*,

Light; whereby we come to know him: Christ's *Voyce*, whereby we hear and follow Him: and Christ's *Cords* of Love, whereby we are drawn into sweet *Union* and Fellowship with Him:

But to *Conclude*; Suppose thou should'st have *Breach* upon *Breach*, and *still* remain a sad *pensive* Soul, all thy *Dayes* here in this *Life*, without any *Spiritual Comfort* or *Inlargement* (after all thy *Wrestlings* and *Endeavours*), it may be for *twenty*, *thirty*, or *forty* *Years*; yet, What is this to *Eternity*? What if it were for a *hundred* *Years*, so thou com'st to *Heaven* at last, and escap'st those *Everlasting Torments*, which are prepared for the *Wicked*? Ye shall *weep* and *lament* (saith Christ to his *Disciples*, *Joh. 16. 20.*), but the *World* shall *rejoyce*; Yea, but your *Sorrow* shall be turn'd into

Joy, and the World's Rejoycing into Sorrow and Lamentation. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be Comforted, *Math. 5. 4.*

The Lord supports his People by the secret powerful Influence of his Grace, whil'st they walk in darkness, and want the Light of Spiritual Consolation. And here let us consider these four things:

(1.) God doth never totally desert his Saints: The Lord will not forsake his People for his great Name's sake, *1 Sam. 12. 22.* He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, *Heb. 13. 5.* The Words are Emphatical: Here is a *Duplication* of the Subject of the Promise, I will not leave, I will not forsake: And a *Multiplication* of Negatives; no fewer than five *Negatives*, by which God intimates, That he will not,

not, yea, he will not, surely he will not *forsake* his Servants; He will never *wholly* reject them, nor *utterly* leave them: If he *leave* them, 'tis but for a *season*; If he *go* from them, 'tis but as one that goes from *home*, to return speedily again: I will not (saith Christ) leave you *Comfortless*, or as *Orphans* at *Sixes* and *Sevens*; but I will *come* to you, *Job. 14.18.* He may sometimes *frown*, but he will *smile* again: If at any time his *Compassions* towards his People seem to be *restrained*, yet they cannot be *extinguished*.

(2.) Though God may vary in the *Operations* of his *Love*; yet his *Love* in it self, is still the *same*, and shall be the *same* for-ever, *Jer. 31. 30.* *Psal. 89. 30, 44.* *Job. 13.1.* In the *Summer*, there's *Light* inherent in the *Sun*, and *Light* fluent

from the *Sun*; That's ever perfect and permanent; but *this* may suffer Changes, and be obscured, as in the Night it happens. The *Root* doth not always give so much *Sapp* to the *Branches*, as to make them *Budd* and *Blossom*; yet she doth always stick close to them, and influence and maintain them. A Father may have a dear *Love* to his Child, and yet shew but little of it in his Carriage, as *David* towards his Son *Absolom*; and so it may be in this *Case*.

(3.) When God hides his *Face* from his People, he with-holds those Acts of Love *only*, that are for their *well-being*; not those that are for their *being*. Though a *true* Christian may want that, without which he cannot have *Comfort*; yet he shall never want that, without which he cannot *live*: In this respect,

respect, God never with-holds any good Thing from them that walk uprightly, *Psal. 84. 11.*

(4.) A *Christian* may miss much of the *External* Presence of God, and yet enjoy *inward* Communion with him; He may want the *Comforting* Presence of God, (in respect of Soul-ravishing Joyes and Inlargements) and yet at the same time, partake of the powerful *gracious* Influence of the Spirit of God, for his *sustentation* and *Support*: This doth never *utterly* forsake him: And this is *oft-times* most in *Power*, when it is least in *out-ward shew* and *Appearance*; and *Saints* have *most* of God, when they see him *least*; whose *gracious Power* may, and doth *operate effectually*, where there is but little *sense* and *Feeling* of it. *Metals* that lye deep under *Ground*,

and see not the *Heavens*; yet partake of their Powerful Influence. When God cover'd *Moyses* his Face in the *Cleft* of the Rock, *Exod. 33. 22.* then did he *pass* by, and gave *Moyses* to see his *Glory*: So, the Clouds and *Vailes*, which now cover the Eyes of many Pensive *disconsolate* Christians, are often *Forerunners* of the Clearest *Light*, and most Soul-ravishing *Sights* of God.

How ever (poor Soul) be content to remain for a while in this World, without these *Soul-ravishing* Joyes, and Tasts of Heaven, (if God will have it so): Doubtless, there's a great *Difference* betwixt the Condition of *Saints* in the *Church-Militant*, and the *Church-Tryumphant*. Heaven, at laft, will make *amends* for All; and that *glorious* Communion with God, which is

is Reserved for the *Saints* in the Church-*Tryumpham*, will Counter-vail all the *Sad* and Sorrowful Thoughts, Pressures, and Temptations, which now they are *expos'd* unto, in their *Militant* Estate and Condition.

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THE CONTENTS OF
this small Tract, touching
Sad Disconsolate Thoughts

Text. *Psal. 94. 19.* Opened and
Explained.

Observation. Saints should Watch a-
gainst Sad, *Melancholy*, Unbe-
lieving *Thoughts*.

I.

Such Sad Disconsolate Thoughts,
are here described.

II.

The Causes of them are set down.
First: Bodily distempers, espe-
cially *Melancholy*, do partly cause
them. Second.

The Contents.

Secondly: There are spiritual Causes of these Sad Thoughts.

As 1. Those remaining Principles of Carnal Reason and Unbelief that are in the Saints.

2. They are Caused by a deep sense of Sin, and the desert of it.

3. By Spiritual Deserion, or Gods hiding His Face from the Soul.

4. From the Sad apprehension of Divine wrath and displeasure.

5. From the Violent Temptations and Injections of Satan, the Prince of Darkness.

6. By looking at Death in the Terrible Glass of the violated Law of God.

The CURE of these Sad Thoughts.

I.

IF Melancholy be the Cause, then use the means which God has appointed for the Cure of it. As

The Contents.

1. Use Physick, moderate Exercise, good Diet.
2. Let your Converse be with Wise, Compassionate Christians, that have had experience of this sad Distemper, and of Remedies against it.
3. Consider, though the cure of Melancholy be a torture to Physicians, yet God can easily Rebuke it.

I I.

If your Sad Thoughts be caused by Spiritual Distempers, Then,

1. In General, endeavour to Comfort these Sad Thoughts by applying Spiritual Remedies.
2. Often chide your selves for these Sad Unbelieving Thoughts.

More particularly,

First: Does Satan, that spirit of Darkness, work upon thy Melancholy distem-

The Contents.

distemper, Unbelief, Carnal Reason ? Then take to thee the Shield of Faith, that thou mayest quench his fiery Darts.

Secondly : *If thy Sins make thee Sad, and press thee down, go to Christ, who freely Invites the Soul that's burthened and heavy laden.*

Thirdly : *If at present thou doest not behold the Face of God with joy, yet consider His Love is Unchangeable, and whom He Loves once, He loves for ever.*

Fourthly : *If thou hast Sad Apprehensions of Divine Wrath and Displeasure, remember that Christ thy Surety, has borne the Wrath of God for Sinners.*

Fifthly : *If thou art Tempted by Satanical Injections to Blasphemy, &c. and doest abhor and resist the Temptation ? Consider it is thy Tryal, not thy Sin.*

The Contents.

Sixtly: If the fear of Death cause Sad Thoughts, learn to look at Death in the comfortable Glass of the Gospel of Christ.

Some further Directions for a poor Soul that's perplexed with Sad and dark Thoughts.

I. Direction. Call to Remembrance, and improve former evidences of God's Love and Kindness to you.

II. Plead and expostulate humbly with God when He seems to hide His Face from thee. This Direction is drawn out and enlarged in five particulars.

III. Improve the Soul sorrows and sufferings of Christ, who bore the wrath of God in His soul, that thy soul might rejoice in God.

IV. Renew thy Faith and Repentance in good earnest, as if hitherto thou hadst never done it to purpose.

V. Trust in the Name of God Jehovah.

The Contents.

wah for Comfort and Salvation:
There's enough in this Name to sup-
port thee under all thy sad pressures.

VI. Furnish thy self with fit mat-
ter out of the Holy Scriptures for
Heavenly Thoughts and Meditations.

This was the practise of the Pro-
phet David.

Of Job who esteemed the Word of
God more than his necessary Food.

Of Nepotianus, whom Hierom speaks
of.

Of Augustin, and his dear Friend
Alipius.

Of Mr. Bilney, Martyr.

Of Bishop Latimer, Martyr.

Of Alice Benden, Martyr.

Of Mrs. Katherine Brettergh.

Of Mr. John Holland, an Eminent
Saint, and Preacher of the Gospel.

The Contents.

Rules to be observed in reading the
Sacred Scriptures for the *Comfort*
of a *Sad Disconsolate Soul*.

1. Rule. *Beg Heavenly Wisdom of
God, that thou maist discern the true
sense of Scripture.*

2. *Labour for a truly gracious
spirit.*

3. *Come to the Reading of Scrip-
ture, for thy Comfort, with a Hum-
ble, Teachable, Self-denying frame
of heart.*

4. *Eye Christ for thy Comfort and
Salvation, as the chief scope, mar-
row, and substance of the Scriptures.*

Here are four **Considerations** sub-
joined.

1. *Confid. God never totally de-
serts his Saints.*

2. *Though God may vary in the O-
perations and Manifestations of His
Love, yet His Love in it self, is still
the*

The Contents.

the same, Constant and Everlasting,

3. That those acts of Divine Love,
which tend to the Essence and being
of a true Christian, God never with-
holds from him.

4. A Christian may want the sen-
sible Presence of God, as to Spiritual
joys and inlargements. and yet at the
same time partake of the powerful in-
fluence of the Holy Ghost for his Sup-
port.

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